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SUBJECT: PKS VERSUS THE WORLD IN JAKARTA GOVERNOR'S RACE

REF: A. 06 JAKARTA 13419 (PKS SUFFERS SETBACK)

[1](#)B. 06 JAKARTA 11376 (GOVERNOR'S RACE TAKES SHAPE)

JAKARTA 00001157 001.2 OF 004

Classified By: Political Officer Eric W. Kneedler, reasons: 1.4 (b) and (d).

SUMMARY

[1](#)1. (C) On August 8, Jakarta will host the first directly contested governor's election in the 500-year history of the city. The election represents arguably the most significant political event in the country between now and the 2009 Presidential elections, and the results will have implications for the major parties and potential candidates in 2009. Sitting Vice Governor Fauzi Bowo has enlisted the support of 17 political parties in his bid for the governorship and clearly established himself as a prohibitive favorite. The Prosperous Justice Party (PKS), the largest party in the city with just under 25 percent of the local legislative seats, nominated former Deputy Police Chief Adang Daradjatun as its candidate (Ref B). As with all elections in Indonesia, money politics have played a major role in shaping the playing field for the governorship. Our contacts tell us that Vice Governor Fauzi purchased the support of three of the four largest political parties in Jakarta for at least five billion Indonesian rupiah apiece (\$555,000). Adang reportedly paid PKS between 15 and 25 billion rupiah (\$1,666,666 - \$2,750,000) for its support. Fauzi and Adang's deep pockets, coupled with the sheer enormity of Fauzi Bowo's coalition, have effectively frozen out potential opposition and turned the election into a two man show: Adang and PKS versus Fauzi and everyone else.

FAUZI ASSEMBLES COALITION USING CASH AND COMMON ENEMY

[1](#)2. (C) Vice Governor Fauzi Bowo moved aggressively to establish himself as the overwhelming favorite in the Governor's race. As reported in Ref B, Fauzi has masterfully, if not always ethically, taken full advantage of the trappings of incumbency to increase his name recognition. The Vice Governor spearheaded an anti-drug campaign that conveniently involved the use of his likeness on several thousand posters placed strategically all over the city. He emerged from Governor Sutiyoso's shadows over the course of the last year to become a frequent spokesperson for government policy, and spends a good deal of his time

traveling throughout the city participating in events that one could be excused for confusing with campaign rallies. Perhaps most importantly, he has effectively distanced himself from the disastrous flooding that killed dozens of Jakartans and left thousands homeless earlier this year.

13. (C) As successful as Fauzi has been in boosting his name recognition through his non-official campaign, the real difference maker at this early stage has been Fauzi's ability to influence the election the old fashioned way: with cash. Dadan Irawan, a member of the Golkar party central board, told us that Vice Governor Fauzi paid off the three largest parties in the Jakarta local legislature after PKS (the Democratic Party with 20 percent, the Indonesian Democratic Party - Struggle (PDI-P) with 13.5 percent, and Golkar with 8 percent) to endorse his candidacy and crowd out opposition. Dadan said the Vice Governor gave them each a minimum of five billion rupiah for their support, and then secured the backing of another 13 smaller parties for varying amounts. Fauzi's alliance also now includes the United Development Party (PPP), with 7.5 percent; the Prosperous Peace Party (PDS), with 5.7 percent; and the Reform Star Party (PBR), with 3 percent. If Fauzi's coalition stays together and every party that has announced support for his candidacy formally registers with him on June 5, he will have the support of 63.1 percent of the seats represented in the Jakarta legislature

14. (C) Dadan told us that Fauzi's primary financier in the massive party buyout effort has been sitting Governor Sutiyoso. According to Dadan and other contacts, Sutiyoso eagerly bankrolled Fauzi's candidacy with the full expectation that Fauzi would reward this loyalty by blocking any efforts to investigate Sutiyoso's murky business dealings after he departs office. Fauzi will be expected not only to protect Sutiyoso from messy corruption charges, but also to

JAKARTA 00001157 002.2 OF 004

allow him to continue the money making opportunities he has enjoyed while Governor.

15. (C) According to Dadan, money was not the only weapon that Fauzi used to assemble his prodigious coalition. Reprising their successful cooperation in the Banten gubernatorial election (Ref A), Golkar and PDI-P opted to join forces in a conscious effort to defeat PKS. Dadan told us that Golkar still very much viewed PKS as a threat and believed that it was essential to defeat PKS resoundingly in the governor's race. A PKS victory would give the party a springboard to bigger and better things, and Golkar's leadership felt it was imperative to band together with as many parties as possible to defeat the common threat.

FAUZI BOWO ON HIS PROSPECTS

16. (C) When the Charge d'Affaires recently met with Vice Governor Fauzi and asked about the campaign, Fauzi replied somewhat disingenuously that he faced an "uphill struggle." Fauzi said that his current responsibilities as Vice Governor prevented him from campaigning or advertising and argued that this would handicap him relative to the opposition. Fauzi noted that shortly after the floods devastated Jakarta earlier this year, many political pundits commented that his political future had "washed away with the flood water." He pointed out that while that speculation was obviously premature, the flooding issue would loom large and he would have to find a way to articulate how he would battle the problem as Governor.

17. (C) After the Charge noted Fauzi's broad political support, the Vice Governor downplayed the importance of party endorsements and stressed that individual voters would select a candidate based on his or her merits, not their party affiliation. The Vice Governor told the Charge that he had not yet selected his running mate, but implied that it would

most likely be someone with a military background (Note: the media have widely reported that former generals are the top two candidates for the job: Mokodongan and Kirbianto. End Note). According to Fauzi, the Jakarta governor's race was extremely significant and would serve as a "barometer" for the 2009 Presidential race.

PKS SHOWS ITS HAND

18. (C) As reported in Ref B, PKS announced last year that Adang Daradjatun would run as the PKS candidate for governor.

PKS recently announced that Dani Anwar, a local Jakarta legislator, would run as his deputy. From the start, the choice of Adang was a curious one for a party allegedly committed to clean governance, social justice, and the purity of the Islamic struggle. After all, Adang had developed a reputation as the "wealthiest police officer in Indonesia," and no one seemed to believe this was because of his wife's inheritance. Beyond the rampant allegations of corruption, his position within the law enforcement establishment seemed like a poor fit for PKS. The most surprising aspect of the pick, however, was the fact that he had very little name recognition. PKS held the most seats in the Jakarta legislature and had an opportunity to capture the most important governorship in the country. Not only that, but winning in Jakarta would give the party a signature victory and generate momentum, not to mention provide a showcase to demonstrate the party's capacity to govern. So, everybody wanted to know, why would PKS nominate an anonymous corrupt cop as the PKS standard bearer for its biggest election test yet?

19. (C) The primary reason PKS selected Adang, it turned out, was pretty straightforward: money. According to PKS legislator Zulkieflimansyah (Zul), Adang simply outbid everybody else and secured the party's support for 15 billion rupiah (Note: several of our other contacts told us Adang paid 25 billion. End Note). Though Zul admitted to a heated internal party debate about whether to sell out to the highest bidder, ultimately PKS determined the party needed the money. Zul told us that another key factor that came into play was the shortage of qualified PKS cadres. According to Zul, the party lacked individuals with the right combination of name recognition and governing skills to fit the bill. Nominating someone like MPR Chairman Hidayat Nur

JAKARTA 00001157 003.2 OF 004

Wahid with the star power to win, but without the capacity to govern effectively, would be a disaster for the party. Winning the election would be the easy part he said; PKS did not have anyone who could run the city effectively.

110. (C) In the Charge d'Affaire's April 18 meeting with PKS Chairman Tifatul Sembiring and Zulkieflimansyah, the two PKS leaders admitted that the party had committed to Adang because of his wealth. Tifatul said that PKS had very little money and needed to boost its finances. According to Tifatul, Adang's strong police connections would also be extremely useful to the party in local elections throughout the country. The party's relations had always been rocky with the police, Tifatul said, but Adang had changed that virtually overnight. Zul told the Charge that the choice of Adang also had the added benefit of inoculating the party against charges of radicalism. How radical a party could PKS be if it was willing to nominate a policeman for governor, Zul asked rhetorically?

111. (C) On April 20, we attended the PKS anniversary celebration and asked PKS legislator Abdul Hakim for his thoughts on the election. According to Abdul, PKS could not win the Jakarta governorship "alone" and had virtually no chance at victory; expectations were low. Fauzi Bowo would win handily he said, but this would actually be a good for the party, as no one within its leadership actually believed PKS was ready to assume the burden of leading the city

anyway. It would be, he added, the ideal outcome. PKS would take Adang's money and lose, but without damaging its image.

SARWONO TRIES TO FIGHT HIS WAY INTO THE RACE

¶12. (C) As it now stands, Fauzi Bowo and Adang Daradjatun collectively enjoy the support of 86.6 percent of the seats represented in the Jakarta legislature. Candidates must enlist the backing of parties, or coalitions of parties, with at least 15 percent in order to qualify for the race. If Fauzi Bowo's coalition stays intact until the official June 5 registration deadline, no other potential candidates would be able to muster the minimum requisite support.

¶13. (C) There is only one other candidate with the slightest hope of securing the 15 percent needed to register. Sarwono Kusumaatmadja, a member of the Regional Representatives Council (DPD) and a former environment minister is the one candidate who has evinced any interest in actually debating issues of importance. A former Golkar Secretary-General, he was the first minister to demand Suharto's resignation in 1998 and would bring legitimate reformist credentials to a potential candidacy. He established an impressive internet site to promote his ideas on everything from combating bird flu to women's rights (www.sarwono.net), and would undoubtedly inject a much needed note of seriousness into the campaign.

¶14. (C) In recent weeks, both the National Mandate Party (PAN) and National Awakening Party (PKB), the fifth and eighth largest parties in Jakarta respectively, have lined up behind his candidacy. At least five other very small parties have also allegedly pledged their support to Sarwono, yet he can still only claim 12.6 of the seats in the Jakarta legislature. Complicating matters for Sarwono, the PAN/PKB alliance that forms the backbone of his current coalition is uneasy at best. The two parties have sparred publicly about the second half of the Sarwono ticket and it is unclear if there is any prospect for a compromise pick for Vice Governor that would satisfy both. Regardless, even with the support of PAN, PKB, and all the remaining small, unattached parties, Sarwono needs a significant defection from the Fauzi Bowo camp in order to run. By all accounts, such a defection is unlikely, and the odds are that Sarwono will be forced to watch the election from the sidelines.

FAUZI IN THE LEAD

¶15. (C) A recent Indonesian poll conducted by the Indonesian Survey Institute (LSI) appeared to support the general impression that the election will be Fauzi Bowo's to lose. According to LSI, 34 percent of respondents pointed to Fauzi Bowo as their top choice for governor, while retired general Agum Gumelar came in second with 20 percent, despite the fact

JAKARTA 00001157 004.2 OF 004

that he does not have a political vehicle to run. Adang came in third with 19 percent, while Sarwono rounded out the poll with 10 percent.

WHY THE ELECTION MATTERS

¶16. (C) Conventional wisdom suggests that the Jakarta governor's race will, in some fashion, serve as a litmus test for the 2009 presidential election. While this may be overstating the case (the distribution of party support in Jakarta is significantly different from the national electoral map), its national significance far surpasses all other local elections and it will generate national headlines.

¶17. (C) No one will be watching the governor's race more closely than Governor Sutiyoso. He has clear designs on

higher office, and his aspirations are directly connected to Fauzi Bowo's fate. If Fauzi wins, Sutiyoso will be able to continue to treat Jakarta like an ATM machine and generate the type of money that he will need to launch a serious presidential candidacy. In the unlikely event that Fauzi loses, Sutiyoso's reputation will take a serious blow, as many people view Fauzi's candidacy as a referendum on Sutiyoso's 10-year reign as governor. Even more significantly, without an ally in the governor's mansion, most people believe Sutiyoso would be vulnerable to any number of criminal investigations.

¶18. (C) Roy Janis, one of the founders of the Democratic Renewal Party (PDP) told us that Sutiyoso had already approached PDP about supporting his 2009 presidential campaign. Our contacts from other parties tell us Sutiyoso has made similar overtures across the political party spectrum. The Jakarta governor's race will go a long way towards determining whether or not his candidacy will be viable.

COMMENT

¶19. (C) The rationale PKS used to select Adang Daradjatun as its candidate for governor reflects a pragmatism that would not seem at all out of place in a Golkar Central Board meeting. Party leaders essentially threw in the towel a year ago and decided to use the race to generate resources for the future. The logic makes sense, in the Indonesian political context, but is yet another indication that PKS is becoming like all the other parties it once worked so hard to differentiate itself from.

¶20. (C) In many ways the Jakarta governor's race has shown the soft underbelly of democracy "Indonesian style." Voters hungry for a serious campaign about the myriad problems afflicting a city still reeling from devastating flooding, will have to content themselves with "a campaign" between two candidates who bought their way into contention and squeezed out all competition. Despite the intense press coverage of the election and its national importance, the Jakarta elites have rigged the game. What should have been an interesting debate about the future of the city, will instead amount to little more than a coronation for the status quo. Analysts expect turnout to be very low, and it is not difficult to understand why.

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